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ABSTRACT

This critique of Jencks' book on inequality suggests that Jencks and other authors, in criticizing the concept of equal educational opportunity, have considered only one or two dimensions of that concept. In Jencks' case, the report notes, equality was measured only in vocational/economic terms, with the political, social, moral, intellectual, or self development goals of education being ignored. The author compares Jencks' perspectives on the role of education with those of Illich, Kozol, Herndon, and Jensen. A related document is EA 005 079. (JF)

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by Wilma S. Longstreet

foreword by Harold G. Shane

beyond Jencks:

The Myth of Equal Schooling

EA 005 116

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036

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FOREWORD

THIS SMALL book is unusually significant for three reasons. *First*, it represents an important publishing venture for ASCD—the commissioning and rapid-fire development of a high impact statement on a timely topic.

Second, and more important, Wilma Longstreet has demonstrated how infinitely rich ideas can be compressed in a few pages when they are carefully weighed and deftly written. These are busy days for all of us. The harder we try to cope with the rising tides of information that flood about us, the busier and shorter our days become. For this reason, too, Dr. Longstreet's brilliantly presented ideas acquire their *third* dimension of significance. She has contributed to our processes of intellectual digestion at a time when we sorely need such input.

Now a word on the substance of *Beyond Jencks: The Myth of Equal Schooling*. Presently many of us in education find ourselves on the defensive because of widely cited out-of-context quotations and misinterpretations of Christopher Jencks' ill-timed report. Dr. Longstreet, with her creative concept of the educational myth and anti-myth, has given me new insights by expressing what I had heretofore *felt*, but for which I had no personally acceptable perceptions to lubricate my thinking.

To close on a personal note, I hope that Wilma (a one-time doctoral student of mine) will not mind if I say that in her present statement she neatly turned the tables and taught her one-time teacher!

April 1973

HAROLD G. SHANE, *President 1973–74*
Association for Supervision and
Curriculum Development

Wilma S. Longstreet

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Among her publications is a book co-authored with Shirley H. Engle entitled, *A Design for Social Education in the Open Curriculum*, a chapter in the NSSE 1973 Yearbook, and various journal articles. Dr. Longstreet has spent a good portion of the past five years investigating the relationship of diverse ethnic backgrounds to the public school situation, instructional methodology, and curriculum development.

From 1970 to 1972 she was an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana. While at this institution, she developed and directed a pilot project, Teaching Ethnic Minorities, which was based in the Chicago Public Schools. Her work has continued in this area at the University of Michigan, Flint.

Photo by Stan Blood

BEYOND JENCKS:
The Myth of Equal Schooling

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN the early 19th century and the 1920's, public education took on mythological status. It could do no wrong in supporting the American way of life. In this guise of supreme "do-gooder," it collected a variety of attributes leading to expectations far beyond the range of any one social institution.

The Myth

It is widely held, for example, that education fosters democracy, that it develops independent, creative thinkers, that it can help the young make necessary social adjustments, that it can prepare the population vocationally as well as teach the valuable use of leisure time, that it contributes to the building of ethical character and, even, that it can help satisfy the expressive, affective needs of the population. In other words, the claims made for education cover an immense gamut from the *political* to the *intellectual* to the *social* to the *vocational* to the *ethical* and to the development of the affective self.[1] These are claims that have, taken together, made it possible to attribute to education immense powers over the lives of men.

The Anti-Myth: Jencks Among Many

Christopher Jencks' latest work, *Inequality*,[2] attacks, in part, this mythological perception of education. This book, however, is only one among many. The myth is crumbling before the onslaught of a host of critics, most of whom easily demonstrate the failure of the schools to achieve this or that set of expected outcomes. The critics have become so numerous and derive from such disparate sources that, taken together, their efforts have produced the anti-myth—the position that schools are not at all useful or worthwhile for adulthood.

[1] For a detailed analysis of the first five of these claims, see: Arthur R. King, Jr., and John A. Brownell. *The Curriculum and the Disciplines of Knowledge.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1966. Chapter 1.

[2] Christopher Jencks *et al. Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America.* New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972.

Of course, most do not actually say this—do not actually mean this. Nevertheless, they engage in a pattern of negative criticisms that has very really contributed to the rise of the anti-myth. Jencks' book, *Inequality*, belongs to this new mythology. It does not say that the schools are not worthwhile; it merely manipulates statistics and words to demonstrate that schools, regardless of the resources available, do little to offer Americans equal opportunity.[3] Accompanying such a conclusion is the inevitable connotation that schools are ineffectual—at best babysitting institutions.

Mythologizing Equal Educational Opportunity

In essence, Jencks has not really written about education. His topic is equality or rather the lack of it in American society. It is a topic that touches not only into the heart of every American but into the shame of most white Americans and into the rage of many Blacks. Jencks' apparently objective use of statistics tends to be caught up in the emotions of our times. Though perhaps not intentionally, the end result of his efforts is another negative evaluation of the schools, this time for not having achieved equal opportunity.

Jencks clearly believes that the schools ought not to have been charged with equalizing opportunity in the first place for they could, at best, be only indirect remedies for the inequities of adulthood.[4] The results, however, are caught between the myth and the anti-myth, between those who feel the schools have vast powers over every aspect of society and those who believe the schools are ineffectual remnants of another era. A classic example of the way Jencks' work has been perceived by a large segment of the public can be noted in the following few sentences excerpted from the *Carnegie Quarterly:*

> *Inequality* says things that a great number of people do not want to hear. It says that American schools do not do the job that they are thought to be doing—that educators are unqualified to make the essential changes, and that no amount of money will make these changes possible.[5]

While Jencks cannot be faulted for the interpretations of

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 4-11.

[5] Jerrold K. Footlick. "Inequality in America: A Problem Too Vast for the Schools To Overcome?" *Carnegie Quarterly* 2(4): 1; Fall 1972. A publication of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Used by permission.

others, he is far from blameless. Without examining the goals of education—the myth if you will—without delving into the real meanings of equality, he comes to far-reaching conclusions that are, in breadth, more encompassing than is warranted from the statistical data employed. For example, in his discussion of inequality in cognitive skills, he notes the limitations of the statistical basis:

> . . . we looked at things like physical facilities, libraries and library books, how much homework a school assigned, whether it had heterogeneous or homogeneous grouping, numbers and kinds of personnel, salaries, criteria for selecting teachers, and so forth. We did not look in any detail at things like morale, teacher expectations, school traditions, and school "climate." [6]

Prior to this, he defines "cognitive inequality in fairly narrow terms, as the ability to use language easily and accurately, the ability to understand and make logical inferences from printed material, the ability to use numbers with facility, and the ability to absorb and retain miscellaneous information." [7] His measures of these skills are primarily culturally bound standardized tests. Jencks notes the limitations of these tests, indicating that they tend to "measure pretty much the same thing," a kind of one-dimensional scholastic ability.[8] An entire decade of research and innovation, the sixties, was spent questioning the validity of this one-dimensional scholastic ability. Jencks, however, has no such compunctions. He omits, without a second thought, the complete range of creative and inventive skills such as the ability to recognize new possibilities in old materials and the ability to retain an open mind; he gives equally short shrift to social interaction skills. The omission may be justifiable, but certainly it should be examined in the light of goals presently held for education.

Quite possibly, the omission was the result of difficulties involved in the measurement of creative and social skills. Inability to measure, however, is not a warrant to ignore basic qualities of human development. Similarly, the inability to measure classroom climate or teacher morale does not make it acceptable to omit these from consideration. This is especially true when the conclusions reached are put in terms that ignore the very narrow limits of the data employed, almost as if, having acknowledged the limitations,

[6] Christopher Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

the very acknowledgment had made them disappear. Thus, Jencks concludes:

> Equalizing the quality of elementary schools would reduce cognitive inequality by 3 percent or less.
>
> Equalizing the quality of high schools would reduce cognitive inequality by 1 percent or less. . . .
>
> Additional school expenditures are unlikely to increase achievement and redistributing resources will not reduce test score inequality.[9]

What Jencks has really concluded is that the number of books available in a school library, the amount of homework assigned, etc., bear little relationship to the scores achieved on certain standardized tests measuring a limited range of cognition in all probability closely connected to basic reading skills. The question Jencks avoids is whether raising standardized test scores is or should be a major goal of American schools today. Should increasing available school facilities not have other, perhaps more important objectives than those measured in Jencks' data?

The term "quality" as used by Jencks completely avoids any reference to the depth of study engaged in at one school as compared with another; to the nature of the study undertaken as, for instance, whether the objectives are oriented toward the acquisition of facts or processes; to the kind of classroom climate established and its possible relationships to citizenship development, etc. In other words, while persisting in using the terminology, "quality," Jencks avoids dealing with the qualitative, basing all of his conclusions on narrowly defined quantitative factors. Vital issues that need to be dealt with are thus suavely sidestepped.

Jencks is really not concerned with what outcomes of education are possible as well as reasonable and desirable given the present state and perceived needs of society. Notwithstanding the scientific stance of his work, he is one of the foremost contributors to the anti-myth. Like all myth-makers, he takes a few observable empiricals and attributes larger-than-life qualities to them. He does this by first reducing to relative trivia the larger-than-life concept, "equality."

In essence, equality carries with it so many nuances and implications for every aspect of society that its assignment to the schools in the guise of "equal opportunity" cannot but underline the mythological belief in education that has typified the American

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

scene until very recently. Equality and its practical application in a competitive society, equal opportunity, may exist politically and not at all socially, or vice versa; it may typify the economic/vocational situation of a social order but be considered an undesirable quality intellectually; it may even signify the increased similarity of the affective self with the affects of others. The significance of equality interpreted as equal opportunity covers a gamut comparable to the multitude of expectations that Americans have traditionally held for the schools.

Jencks reduces this larger-than-life conception to a few quantifiable terms about which he can come to conclusions. Equal opportunity is measured according to the equality of incomes, cognitive skills, occupational status, educational attainment, and job satisfaction. Each of these terms is further reduced to specifically quantifiable factors. The reduction in cognitive skills to a quite limited range has already been noted. The term "income" retains its usual meaning of financial retribution, but it must be remembered that this is already a very narrowly defined term. Educational attainment, as used by Jencks, has little to do with the depth of understanding achieved or knowledge acquired; it is simply "the highest grade of school or college completed." [10] Occupational status is estimated in terms of financial rewards and educational credentials.[11]

Job satisfaction is vaguely defined on the basis of eight questions designed to estimate the worker's subjective liking of his job.[12] Omitted are objective considerations. For example, while the same eight questions are asked of workers in various occupational statuses, they are not asked to judge their fields in relationship to other fields. In other words, while a teacher may be quite satisfied with his field, he may not be too satisfied with the particular job that he holds in his field. He may also consider the job he holds a necessary step in the progression of his career and be satisfied in that context while still not liking his particular job. Job satisfaction is essentially a much broader concept than job liking.

Having thus reduced equal opportunity to trivial proportions and having successfully ignored such qualitative aspects of equality

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 320.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 177-78.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

as the opportunity to choose one's life style without financial rewards being a major determining factor, Jencks proceeds to return, in the presentation of his conclusions and suggested remedies, to the larger-than-life conception of equal opportunity. He states, for instance: "The schools, of course, could move beyond equal opportunity, establishing a system of compensatory opportunity in which the best schooling was reserved for those who were disadvantaged in other respects." [13] These "other respects" may reach into every area of society. Jencks really does not specify. A little further on, he notes: ". . . no single general strategy will eliminate all sorts of inequality. Instead, there must be a variety of specific strategies for dealing with specific kinds of inequality." [14] In rightly recognizing the multi-faceted character of equality, Jencks substantially enlarges upon his own rather meager limits of the term.

This subtle shifting of definitional limitations from several narrowly interpreted factors to the broadly inclusive can be observed throughout the work. For instance, in discussing educational attainment, Jencks concludes: "Qualitative differences between high schools seem to explain about 2 percent of the variation in students' educational attainment." [15] He means that the grade level reached in school does not seem to correlate with the composition of the student body, the expenditures made by the school, or the curricular offerings. These are all aspects of school organization which Jencks has strictly limited to quantifiable factors. Thus, they poorly reflect the nature of the learning objectives undertaken (for example, whether processes or factual data are stressed), the depth to which certain subjects are studied, and the active involvement and concern in social affairs solicited from students.

Furthermore, it is doubtful that, at least in two of the areas used by Jencks to determine "quality," statistics can validly represent the real situation. If, after all, a school is found to have several significant problems, it is reasonable for the school to spend more money in these areas and to modify its curriculum accordingly. It is also reasonable to recognize that the remedies undertaken may not cure the problems and standardized scores may not change significantly. Indeed, the problems may have little, if any, relation-

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 255.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 260.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

ship to standardized tests. In any case, the lack of a cure does not mean that the effort to cure should be curtailed.

To read Jencks' work as its stated limitations would require, the reader must constantly revise common word denotations and connotations so that these are interpreted as *construed by Jencks.* It is an immensely difficult task and, in the end, terms such as "educational attainment," and "equal opportunity," and "quality" return to their broader, more common significance.

At the crux of both the myth and the anti-myth of education lies a two-fold problem: an inexplicable unwillingness as a nation to deal with the goals held for education and a tendency to trivialize far-reaching, deeply significant concepts for the sake of measurement, only to slip back to the broader meanings. Jencks' effort is but one in a long line of works epitomizing the problem. He takes equality, itemizes a few of its possible meanings in terms of economic returns, length of time, etc., and then comes to sweeping conclusions using the very same terms and thereby returning these to their broader implications. His assumption is that since he has not itemized other meanings, the public will not include their own knowledge of the terms in their readings. Yet, Jencks himself begins to extend the meaning without acknowledging the modification.

Jensen and the Mythology of the IQ

Arthur Jensen's well known study "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" [16] reflects this same problem from a somewhat different perspective. While Jencks takes for granted that a major goal of education is to achieve equality as this is measured by adult incomes, Jensen chooses to limit the functions of the schools to the development of IQ.

Jensen's conception of IQ is relatively flexible, for he does acknowledge that different sets of skills might be included in its composition. His underlying assumption, however, is that the schools ought to develop a given set of preestablished mental abilities. He states:

If the content and instructional techniques of education had been markedly different from what they were in the beginning and, for the most

[16] Arthur R. Jensen. "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" *Harvard Educational Review* 39(1):1-123; Winter 1969. © 1969 by President and Fellows of Harvard College.

part, continue to be, it is very likely that the instruments we call intelligence tests would also have assumed a quite different character. They might have developed in such a way as to measure a quite different constellation of abilities, and our conception of the nature of intelligence, assuming we still called it by that name, would be correspondingly different.[17]

Prior to this statement, Jensen discusses the role of intelligence tests for the schools noting that the IQ is a measure designed to predict probable success in the traditional forms of school. As Jensen concedes, he cannot imagine another form of schooling:

> At least implicit in the [educational] system as it originally developed was the expectation that not all children would succeed. These methods of schooling have remained essentially unchanged for many generations. We have accepted traditional instruction so completely that it is extremely difficult even to imagine, much less to put into practice, any radically different forms that the education of children could take.[18]

The fact that, for well over a decade, there has been a general outcry for change in the traditional goals of education seems to concern Jensen very little.

Jensen's work is a fascinating example of how the anti-myth in education has gradually replaced the myth. The mythologizing phenomenon of definitional shift, especially with reference to overall conclusions and recommendations, is again present. The larger-than-life goals of education that typified the myth are first limited to intellectual development. Jensen then proceeds to shift back and forth between a usage of intelligence that includes all human cognition and a usage closely associated with IQ tests. For purposes of statistical analysis, Jensen limits intelligence to being no more than "the general factor common to standard tests of intelligence." [19] He in no way considers whether other aspects of intelligence such as creative skills might have supplanted in importance those aspects measured by existing standard tests. He admits that we do not know what intelligence really is and that we can only estimate the phenomenon by observing certain behaviors.[20] Nevertheless, his conclusions are so presented that the average reader

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

would naturally surmise that the schools can really do very little for the individual who has not inherited certain innate skills of cognition.

Jensen's definitional shift in his usage of intelligence from the narrowly defined to the much broader conception permits him to make far-reaching though essentially unwarranted recommendations. He states, for example, that schooling and compensatory programs seem unable to increase IQ by any significant amount and therefore: "Educators would probably do better to concern themselves with teaching basic skills directly than with attempting to boost overall cognitive development." [21] Thus, from the limited number of skills investigated via standardized tests, Jensen has determined that schools cannot do very much with any of the numerous skills of cognition that still escape quantification. In practical terms he is saying that the schools cannot help youngsters become actively involved, inductive thinkers capable of independent discovery. Maybe so, but before we can come to such conclusions we need to deal with data measuring skills of cognition not yet included in standardized tests but reflective of present educational goals. Jensen does not even question whether the skills measured by standardized tests are those most emphasized by the compensatory programs in question.

Jensen's definitional shift from intelligence limited to a few skills included on IQ tests to intelligence as overall cognition is the basis upon which he would transfer development of innate intellectual skills from the educator and psychologist to the biologist.[22] It is also the basis upon which he makes some incredibly unfounded assertions about the innate qualities of intelligence inherited by members of different ethnic groups. Because ethnic groups have discernible patterns of behavior that are reflected in the patterns of IQ scores, he suggests that predictable intellectual strengths and weaknesses are carried in the individual's cognitive inheritance. The influence of social-ethnic environment imprinted upon the young practically from birth is limitedly discussed by economic differences (that is, middle class, lower class), but otherwise ignored. Nonetheless, he posits that the schools ought somehow to determine those who can think at the level of associative learning and those who can think at the abstract level and teach accord-

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[22] *Ibid.*

ingly.[23] Throughout all of this apparently scientific musing, the anti-myth continues to grow: the schools cannot do anything to achieve effective change in intellectual development; they must bow to the inevitable realities of inheritance.

The Mythology of Statistical Analyses

There have been an inordinate number of mythologizers of the anti-myth among statistically-oriented researchers. Much of this may be a result of the kinds of measurements and forms of statistical analysis employed to reach conclusions about human behavior.

Statistical analyses are basically techniques for collecting and interpreting numerical data. The statistical methods employed are essentially the same in the physical and social sciences. While physical properties have been easily quantified in terms of observable height, weight, speed, color intensity, distance, etc., the distinct properties of human behavior have not yet been clearly isolated from each other. Many properties of human behavior lack scientific agreement with regard to a specific description. "Empathy" is a case in point. If a statistical analysis dealing with empathy is to be undertaken, the investigator must stipulate the characteristics he attributes to empathy. Since he needs to develop numerical data, the attributes he selects will largely be determined by whether these are quantifiable. While there may be general agreement that empathy is not a property containing factors which can be directly quantified, the investigator will still limit his interpretation of empathy to those factors that can in some way be numbered. Thus, statistical studies of qualitative human behavior tend to reduce highly complex and broadly inclusive properties to simple, linear quantities. The mythologizing phenomenon would seem to be built into statistical methodology when it is applied to complex qualities of human emotion and intellect.

The problem has, at least to some degree, been recognized by many statisticians, and the effort to achieve numerical data reflective of the interactive complexities of human behavior has been undertaken. Jencks, for instance, uses path models in several of his statistical analyses. Path models represent causal connections between various human behaviors. At present, the development of a path model requires a series of assumptions regarding which behaviors are causal to other behaviors. Jencks, for example, makes

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 109-17.

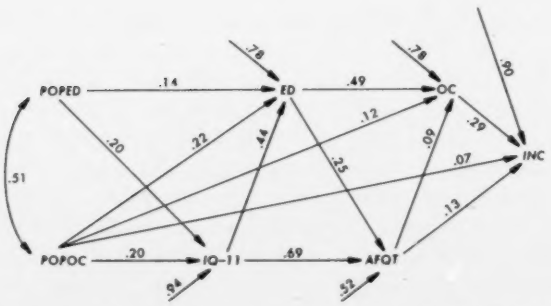

Figure 1. Relationships Between Characteristics of Native White Nonfarm Males Aged 25–64 in 1962, Based on Observed Correlations

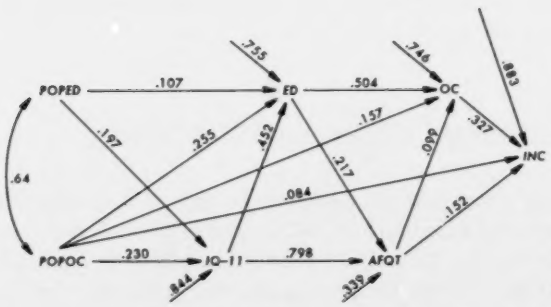

Figure 2. Relationships Between Characteristics of Native White Nonfarm Males Aged 25–64 in 1962, Based on "True" Correlations

use of a path model developed by Duncan. Speaking of the model, Jencks notes:

> It assumes that the father's education (POPED) and father's occupation (POPOC) influence a child's early cognitive skills (IQ-11). Father's education, father's occupation, and the child's cognitive skills all influence the child's educational attainment (ED). Educational attainment and early cognitive skills then determine later cognitive skills (AFQT). . . .
>
> The model assumes that education, cognitive skills, and father's occupation all influence occupational status (OC). . . . Finally, cognitive skills, occupational status, and father's occupational status all influence the respondent's income (INC).[24]

Figures 1 and 2 show two path models to which Jencks' description applies.[25]

[24] Figures 1 and 2 excerpted from *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America*, by Christopher Jencks *et al.*, © 1972 by Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York. p. 338.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 339.

Aside from the fact that the assumptions made about causality are no more than assumptions, and highly questionable ones at that, the path model exhibits the same problem involved in most statistical analyses of human behavior. Each one of the characteristics has had its meaning limited, by stipulation, to quantifiable factors. These limits make it possible to transform such diverse characteristics as "father's occupation" and "cognitive skills" into the same kind of numbers. However, when conclusions are reached and suggestions offered, the characteristics tend to be returned to their normal qualitative values if not by the investigator, then by the reader. In the cases of "equality" and "intelligence" this means returning to ordinary terms that carry an immense gamut of meanings with numerous connotations and very fuzzy definitional limitations. The diversity of interpretations thus possible has helped build the anti-myth.

The "Heartthrob" Authors of the Sixties

Statistically-oriented researchers have given scientific respectability to the anti-myth, but the achievement of mythological proportions must be attributed to the "heartthrob," Homerian writers of the sixties. These are the men who followed the ways of the schools step by step as first-person participants in the inevitable failure of public education. They are victims, along with the children, of the immutable tide of administration and traditions.

The multiplicity of expectations that Americans hold for their schools is of little concern to these writers. They are involved in describing the immediate scene in all its gripping details. The reduction of far-reaching goals for education is built into the nature of their works, which are primarily discussions of classroom and school management—at most, they seem to be talking about improving social interaction and increasing self-development. However, goals in general and the expectations of society are barely of secondary importance in their writings.

A classic contributor to this mythologizing genre is James Herndon.[26] Herndon is a first-year teacher who seems to wander aimlessly about in the middle of a war, with the children on one side and the teachers and administrators on the other. Because he

[26] James Herndon. *The Way It Spozed To Be.* New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1965.

is new, he seems not quite to belong to any side, which is the only claim to objectivity that can be made for his efforts.

Herndon seems to be lost, searching for some adequate way to approach his job:

> I felt uncomfortable with Mrs. Y in the room, just sitting there. I knew she was there to judge my work, and considering that I didn't know what I was doing, I wished they could have waited a while. Not yet! I wanted to say; come around later when I've got it all figured out! [27]

He wanders, in true Homerian fashion, against a background of continual conflagration. During Mrs. Y's visit, his classroom becomes a madhouse while he tries to figure out what the class might do. The entire school is apparently taken over by unruly students and teachers trying to regain control. To quote Herndon: "Springtime at GW was the time for riots." [28] His is the role of the super-hero who wins in the end even while knowing personal defeat. He is eventually forced to resign. Nevertheless, he proudly claims:

> I viewed the daily slaughter with detachment and no little vanity. If at the end of the story the other teachers were beginning to lose, I was just starting to win. If their programs were falling apart, we were just starting to move.[29]

Herndon's description of the school's total inability to handle its students or to communicate to its students anything worthwhile might have remained no more than a series of dramatic episodes experienced by a new teacher who was also a good storyteller. It does not do so for several reasons that seem to parallel those already described in the previous discussion concerning the efforts of Jencks and Jensen.

There is, first of all, the knowledge that the general reading public carries with it independently of the writer. It is the rare reader who has not experienced an overly stern teacher or a villain-principal or fights among kids in the school yard. Everything that Herndon mentions has a familiar ring of truth to his readers, who, for the most part, have not been back to the public schools for years. The "slaughter" he describes is all too easily accepted as a phenomenon continuously present in the hundreds of thousands of schools throughout the nation. The disregard for the youngsters,

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 158.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 159-60.

their feelings, and real needs that Herndon attributes to the teachers of his school is all too easily attributed by the reader to millions of teachers throughout the nation. While in minor ways these are experiences common to most Americans, Herndon's description of them gives them a larger-than-life reality. This is especially true with regard to the fights, riots, and "slaughters" to which Herndon makes regular return. The conflagrations are epic in proportions.

The generalizations are, of course, absurd and Herndon cannot be held responsible for the interpretations of others. On the other hand, the public cannot be expected to forget what it knows. Herndon takes advantage of this knowledge, blowing up his personal experiences to larger-than-life proportions. In essence, his experiences are an infinitesimal view of the total education scene, but Herndon does not hesitate in his sweeping generalizations. First, his classes are doing better than all of the other classes in his school. He has not seen all the other classes, but he is sure nonetheless. Then, he takes a backward view of GW after eight years' absence, while working for a suburban school, and his statements regarding what went wrong take on the quality of an all-knowing prophet:

> Sitting in a classroom or a home pretending to "study" a badly written text full of false information, adding up twenty sums when they're all the same and one would do, being bottled up for seven hours a day in a place where you decide nothing, having your success or failure depend, a hundred times a day, on the plan, invention, and whim of someone else, being put in a position where most of your real desires are not only ignored but actively penalized, undertaking nothing for its own sake but only for that illusory carrot of the future—maybe you can do it, and maybe you can't, but either way, it's probably done you some harm.[30]

Herndon is taking a few well known, observable classroom behaviors, presenting them along with deeply stirring emotional and intellectual deprivations, and then concluding that the schools —all schools—only harm youngsters. Most of the observable behaviors listed are in and of themselves the most trivial aspects of education. "Sitting in a classroom," being in a school for seven hours, pretending to study are acts that every school boy or girl has participated in. Whether the schools do only harm or whether students never decide on anything or are actively penalized for their desires, are significant characteristics which tend to be caught

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

in Herndon's descriptions of trivial but observable school behaviors. Instead, they need to be more clearly understood and more thoroughly investigated. They are not even ascertained by Herndon as being true in the classes of his own school.

Millions of former students recall with affection and gratitude teachers they once deeply resented, but who, upon retrospect, loom as significant and positive influences in their lives. This is a declaration that sounds good but needs verification. If Herndon's biases had been favorable to the schools, his conclusions might have been added to the existing myth—they were, however, negative and active contributions to the rise of the anti-myth. In either case, Herndon's conclusions would have been based on his own extremely limited experiences blown up to national proportions.

The question of definitional accuracy, which Herndon and the other heartthrob writers could avoid because they had no need to reduce terms to quantifiable factors, is no less urgent. Herndon speaks of success and failure, of the deprivation of one's real desires, of the lack of decision-making powers, but never once does he discuss the meanings of these terms and their definitional extensions within the context of education. Should Johnny do whatever he pleases? Should Johnny's real desires all be requited? If not, which desires should be requited? Should teachers not give directions at all? Never once does Herndon deal with the present goals of education. What is it that we ought to expect from education? What is possible? What is desirable?

Herndon, taken alone, would be an insignificant contributor to the anti-myth. But he is not alone. There have been numerous, quite similar replications of his style in the sixties. Kozol, another first-year teacher who was to be dismissed by the Boston Public Schools, published a parallel description of his experiences shortly after Herndon's work appeared.[31] Again, there is a background of conflagration; again, the hero is the first-year teacher; again, the school is totally unable to accomplish its job of classroom management or self-development; again, the question of the goals of education is almost completely ignored. Kozol is more careful in his generalizations, more thoughtful in his class preparations than Herndon. Nevertheless, added to Herndon, and others such as Holt and Kohl, the anti-myth has been firmly established as an emotional reality of the American scene.

[31] Jonathan Kozol. *Death at an Early Age.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967.

"Deschooling": Another Component of the Anti-Myth

Deschooling Society by Ivan Illich [32] has further expanded the range of the anti-myth's continued growth. Jencks has attacked the conception that schools help the achievement of a more successful adulthood in terms of economic returns. Jensen has concluded that the schools can do almost nothing to increase intellectual potential. Herndon and company have demonstrated the ineptitudes of the schools in classroom management as well as their utter inability to achieve reasonable social interaction or an adequate level of self-development.

Thus, the anti-myth is slowly achieving proportions comparable to those of the original myth. The schools are not useful economically, intellectually, socially, or for self-development. Illich now adds to these the political. In essence, he says that the schools are not useful because they are institutions. Institutions in general are seen along the political spectrum from left to right. We are told:

> Right-wing institutions tend to be highly complex and costly production processes in which much of the elaboration and expense is concerned with convincing consumers that they cannot live without the product or the treatment offered by the institution. Left-wing institutions tend to be networks which facilitate client-initiated communication or cooperation.[33]

World bureaucracies all seem to be focusing on one task: "promoting the growth of institutions of the right." [34] Schools are described as one of the "false utilities" institutions which are insidiously creating "a demand for the entire set of modern institutions which crowd the right end of the spectrum." [35] According to Illich, "compulsory learning cannot be a liberal enterprise." [36] He perceives the goal of American education to be that of social conformity in the political sense of *status quo*. Free cooperation and social control, which have been part of American educational goals since the turn of the century, though apparently contradictory, are,

[32] Ivan Illich. *Deschooling Society*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers (Harrow Books), 1970.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 80.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 89.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

according to Illich, actually two sides of the same coin.[37] Needless to say, he does almost nothing to demonstrate the validity of this statement.

As with Jencks' work, this is really not a book about education. It is a book about institutionalization and about how effective change can be achieved only if there is a change at the institutionalizing level. It is in this context that Illich attacks all educational innovations:

> Educational innovators still assume that educational institutions function like funnels for the programs they package. For my argument it is irrelevant whether the packages purveyed are rich or poor, hot or cold, hard and measurable (like Math III) or impossible to assess (like sensitivity). What counts is that education is assumed to be the results of an institutional process managed by the educator.[38]

Thus, there is nothing left for anyone to do that can in any way reflect an organized effort on the part of the members of society to educate their young. Self-motivating learning would seem, according to Illich, to be the only answer.[39] He consequently recommends a very loosely structured series of referral networks to which an individual could go whenever he had the inclination. How these would not be institutionalized remains a complete mystery.

It is interesting to note that, notwithstanding numerous references to educational goals, Illich is not at all interested in the goals of American education. To his mind there is only one goal and that is the molding of people to fit the institutions of the political right. Having come to this conclusion, all other data to the contrary are summarily pushed aside. The fact that schools are being attacked on all sides by teachers, students, and others, that free schools with modified institutional structures are numerous, that many people are electing life styles not dictated by the industrial society seems to count for nothing. Schools of any kind are not good *because they are institutions.* Furthermore, and importantly, this all-inclusive condemnation of the schools is reached without ever once comprehensively defining the concept "institution." Consequently, the definitional extension of the term achieves gigantic proportions, touching every aspect of societal organization.

While the apparent topic of Illich's work is deschooling, that is,

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 101.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

total elimination of the school as a societal organization, his real subject is *deinstitutionalization* of the present societies of the world.

The fundamental assumption of Illich's work is that the majority of present-day institutions are designed to oppress men, to force them into technological "benefits" that they do not want. That men might have any contractual say in the matter at all is not even considered. That schools might help men to demand a say is equally ignored.

Before society can be deschooled, it must be asked whether society can or should be deinstitutionalized. Put in these terms, and these are the terms corresponding to Illich's usages, the question of deschooling becomes insignificant. The real question is, shall society be disintegrated with a consequent return to small group living? What Illich has done is imbue the lesser question of deschooling with all the significances of the greater question—deinstitutionalization.

It becomes fairly clear that Illich has not veered too far from the mythologizing pattern described earlier in this paper. First, the goals of American education are reduced, this time to a kind of political *status quo* in which the right dominates. Then, the schools, because they are institutions, are shown to be unable to do anything to modify this goal. To prove this, Illich brings into play a wide array of institutions, referring only infrequently to the schools. This imbues the school with all the meanings to which societal institutions can refer, thereby making them larger than life while still tying them to a single kind of educational goal. In the end, the anti-myth is expanded. The institutions called schools can do nothing to change their political position, which is, according to Illich, irrevocably on the right of the political spectrum.

Demythologizing Education

From Jencks to Jensen to Herndon and Kozol to Illich, the recurring question is how can we demythologize? How can we begin to deal with education so that our criticisms become credible as well as viable vehicles of change? At least the initial steps toward the demythologization of education are contained in those aspects of the problem that have permitted both the myth and anti-myth to arise in the first place.

We must examine the goals of education in the light of what is real, possible, and desirable. We must, furthermore, clarify our

definitions of significant terms, not merely as we would use them in a particular analysis of education but as the reading public would use them. Reading, after all, is both an interactive and an additive process, and the meanings of the reader tend to become fused with and even indistinguishable from those of the author.

With reference to the authors discussed in this paper, several important changes would occur. Jencks would revise his usage of such terms as "equal opportunity," "quality," "cognitive skills," "educational attainment," and "job satisfaction." His revisions would include accurate rewording of many of his conclusions, so that these would be valid in the light of the kind of data employed. (This assumes, of course, that the statistical analyses were correct to begin with.) Perhaps even more important because Jencks has not bothered to do this at all, he would engage in a careful search of the real, the possible, and the desirable goals of education.

The prescription does not stray much for any of the authors. Jensen would revise his usage of "intelligence," "IQ," and "cognitive skills." His conclusions and suggestions would be revised to fit the limitations of his data. The goals of education as they are today and as they should and could be would be examined.

Because of their particular kind of vehicle, Herndon, Kozol, and company are less in need of definitional clarification with regard to specific terms. Nonetheless, they would clarify such ideas as the satisfaction of students' "real desires." The epic descriptions of school conflagrations, the heroic deeds of the first-year teacher, the villain character of the principal would all be held within the limits of a firsthand experience. Again, the short shrift given to educational goals would be remediated.

Illich would cope with the relationship of deschooling to deinstitutionalization and perhaps revise his central thesis from "deschooling society" to "deinstitutionalizing society." He would reconsider the goals of American education not merely in the light of what he believes is the reality but in the light of what could be and ought to be the goals of any educational structure. He would need to do this even within the context of his own four referral systems if reasonable policy decisions are to be made with regard to the practical organization of the systems. Considering possible goals, he might also force himself to come to grips with a historical reality—never, in recorded history, have the majority of members of a society become literate, knowledgeable members of that society without the societal intent to achieve such a goal. This is not to say that Illich's plan is not possible, but rather that its

viability and the viability of its goals (regardless of what these goals might be) within the context of humanness ought to be examined.

While the problem of improving definitional clarity varies in nature and urgency from one work to another, the unwillingness to deal with the goals of education remains a persistent inadequacy in educational writings. It may well be that the immensity of the original myth has discouraged the undertaking. It is far simpler to deal with and present one's own individual set of goals than to take on the entire gamut of possibilities relating one's own position to the total view. Yet, all an educator needs to do is ask a group of preservice teachers to list the various expectations that the paying public has with regard to the public school system to ascertain not only the gamut but the reality of the gamut in the minds of the average citizen. This author has done precisely that and has found undergraduate students able to list an astounding variety of claims. Under analysis, most of the claims are easily placed into one of the six categories previously listed: the vocational-economic claim; the political claim; the social claim; the moral-ethical claim; the intellectual claim; the claim for self-development. The claim for physical improvement is sometimes encountered in the lists developed by undergraduates, but after lengthy consideration, it is usually decided that this is not a significant expectation held by the public and may be incorporated under the social and self-development claims. The claims are not mutually exclusive but rather represent the decision to emphasize one kind of development over other kinds.

Acknowledging the existing categories of public expectations does not really help the critic of education to achieve a true image of the goals under which the schools would ideally operate. The claims are merely areas of emphasis. They must be related to beliefs about man and his proper relationship to society. To say, for instance, that a society would emphasize vocational development still does not clarify the kind of content, or the school organization, or the instructional methodologies that could logically be expected in the schools. Schools, within the limits of the vocational claim, could prepare youngsters in the vocations described in the Bible so that salvation would be assured; they could prepare youngsters to satisfy the existing industrial/technological needs à la Illich; they could prepare youngsters to be inventors of new vocations. Much would depend on the perspectives of man held by the school.

The perspectives of man that a society might hold are not

Man above all preparing for an afterlife; his essential qualities are predetermined but he may have free will to use them for good or evil.	Man above all preparing to fit into the superorganic structures of society; his essential qualities are predetermined but his happiness depends upon his being able to fit into the structures of this world.	Man above all a contractual participant of society—a change agent of society; he is innately social with a broad but not unlimited range of powers—understanding humanness is essential to the development of a successful contract.	Man innately social but of unlimited potential and in control of his destiny in this universe; flexible societal organization is vital to the true fulfillment of man's potential.	Man a being of unlimited potential but not necessarily social—individual expression is more important than society.

Figure 3. Spectrum: Perspectives of Man

actually separate entities but continuous members of a spectrum. For the sake of clarity, five perspectives indicative of the range of the spectrum are shown in Figure 3.

The perspectives of man combined with the claims or categories of expectations yield a grid that is useful in the examination of the general goals of education held either societally or individually. This two-dimensional grid is shown in Figure 4.

PERSPECTIVES OF MAN	SOCIETY'S CLAIMS ON EDUCATION					
	Vocational/ Economic Development	Political Development	Social Development	Moral/ Ethical Development	Intellectual Development	Self-Development
Man above all preparing for an afterlife; his essential qualities are predetermined but he may have free will to use them for good or evil.						
Man above all preparing to fit into the superorganic structures of society; his essential qualities are predetermined but his happiness depends upon his being able to fit into the structures of this world.						
Man above all a contractual participant of society—a change agent of society; he is innately social with a broad but not unlimited range of powers—understanding humanness is essential.						
Man innately social but of unlimited potential and in control of his destiny in this universe; flexible societal organization is vital to the true fulfillment of man's potential.						
Man a being of unlimited potential but not necessarily social—individual expression is more important than society.						

Figure 4. Perspectives of Man Combined with the Categories of Expectations

Because educational goals are varied, several parts of the grid will usually be found operating simultaneously. This is especially true with regard to the claims. The perspective "Man Above All Preparing for an Afterlife" might be interpreted educationally as a need to prepare youngsters for certain social, political, and

moral behaviors while leaving vocational development to practical apprenticeship, and the development of the intellect and of the self to chance.

Because the nature of educational goals is not often dealt with, it may well be that the same society—or, for that matter, the same critic—will bring several perspectives of man into play simultaneously. This often leads to contradictory or incompatible goals. For instance, the goal of developing the child's unlimited potential may be added to the goal of developing a good citizen. The former is an asocial goal while the latter presumes the social environment. It is conceivable that these goals might exist together, but their relationship to each other, *in practice*, must be carefully worked out. Cogent awareness of the underlying goals of education is the first practical step toward the achievement of goals in the real world.

The two-dimensional grid proposed here is not only useful in comparing general goals of education; it also offers a graphic way of comparing the relative positions of the critics of education. For instance, Illich in *Deschooling Society* accepts as the dominating claims of education political and vocational development. He finds all other claims at present to be of little consequence. On the other hand, he seems to perceive of man as a social being of unlimited potential. In his view, the vocational/economic and political claims of world society seem to be incompatible with his perspectives of man—which may very well be true, but ought to be examined in all of its possibilities.

Jencks restricts his emphasis primarily to vocational/economic development. His perspective of man is none too clear but seems to lie somewhere between man fitting into society and man a contractual participant of society, with the former probably receiving more weight. He seems to have no conflicts in his view.

Herndon's position is the least clear of the three authors. Social and self-development seem to be the claims of major emphasis, but his perspective of man vacillates somewhere between man a contractual participant of society and man an asocial being of unlimited potential.

The relative positions of these three authors are mapped on the grid in Figure 5. It is perhaps a "boring" operation to find one's views on a grid, but it offers a plan for logical coherence which could effectively limit the mythologizing that has typified educational criticism of recent decades.

PERSPECTIVES OF MAN	SOCIETY'S CLAIMS ON EDUCATION					
	Vocational/ Economic Develop- ment	Political Develop- ment	Social Develop- ment	Moral/ Ethical Develop- ment	Intellectual Develop- ment	Self- Develop- ment
Man above all preparing for an afterlife; his essential qualities are predetermined but he may have free will to use them for good or evil.						
Man above all preparing to fit into the super-organic structures of society; his essential qualities are predetermined but his happiness depends upon his being able to fit into the structures of this world.	Jencks					
Man above all a contractual participant of society—a change agent of society; he is innately social with a broad but not unlimited range of powers—understanding humanness is essential.	Jencks		Herndon			Herndon
Man innately social but of unlimited potential and in control of his destiny in this universe; flexible societal organization is vital to the true fulfillment of man's potential.	Illich	Illich				
Man a being of unlimited potential but not necessarily social—individual expression is more important than society.			Herndon			Herndon

Figure 5. Relative Positions of Three Authors

The two-dimensional grid is useful in the clarification of underlying goals. In other words, it can help us examine our ideals and what is generally possible. It does not help us to clarify how these ideals are related to actual school behavior. The organization of the school; the ways administrators and teachers act toward the students, toward each other, and toward the community; the ways students act toward each other and toward teachers and administrators; the materials and tests selected as well as the power for making selections; all are meaningful behaviors representative of goals that are being put into practice.

This conglomeration of behaviors has sometimes been called the "hidden" curriculum. It is quite possible that the general goals held by a society are contradicted by the actual behaviors to be found in schools. Herndon, Kozol, and company really never leave this behavioral level. Nor do they try to determine what goals they support and the behaviors in school that would reflect these goals.

Interestingly, despite the statistical orientation of both Jencks and Jensen, neither deals with the ongoing behaviors of classroom activity. The closest they come to classroom behavior is via the mediating structure of nationally accepted, standardized tests. Illich reaches some broad generalizations about the results of schooling, but he deals minimally with what actually goes on in the classroom. It is really surprising, but of the authors discussed in

this paper, none has fully explored the goals of education either at the level of ideals or at the level of actual behaviors in the school.

A graphic analysis of the relationship of classroom behaviors to either ideal or possible goals requires a three-dimensional interaction of categories. The societal claims on education related to perspectives of man must be brought into the context of the ranges of behaviors actually occurring in the schools. These behaviors, however, must not be surmised. They must be honestly and objectively surveyed. The number of times a behavior appeared would be the only use of numbers necessary in such a survey. The interpretation of behaviors would be open to critical debate which would hopefully clarify underlying meanings.

Since behaviors are essentially of human origin and are frequently dependent on the individual's role (this is especially true in the schools), the categories for this third dimension have been constructed according to the major roles normally found in the schools: (a) administrator, (b) teacher, (c) student, (d) parent, (e) indirect roles such as that of the politician who must decide on school funding. The questions corresponding to these categories are: What behaviors are exhibited by the administrator, the teacher, etc., while engaged in disciplining, teaching, organizing, etc.?

Figure 6 presents a three dimensional cube which is suggested as a helpful tool in the analysis of behaviors found in the schools and the meanings that these bear (though sometimes in hidden form) with regard to overall goals (which may be "ideal" or simply "possible").

Demythologizing Equal Educational Opportunity

The usefulness of this three-dimensional tool becomes clear when it is applied to the question of equal educational opportunity. Jencks' approach to the question is primarily related to adult economic rewards. Without asking the question, he has decided that equality must be measured in vocational/economic terms. Yet, for each of the claims, a host of questions need to be faced. What is equal opportunity in terms of political development, social development, intellectual development, etc.?

If educational institutions were to give all students the power to determine the government of their schools and if this power were equally distributed among the students, this would still give very little indication of what equal opportunity might mean in the

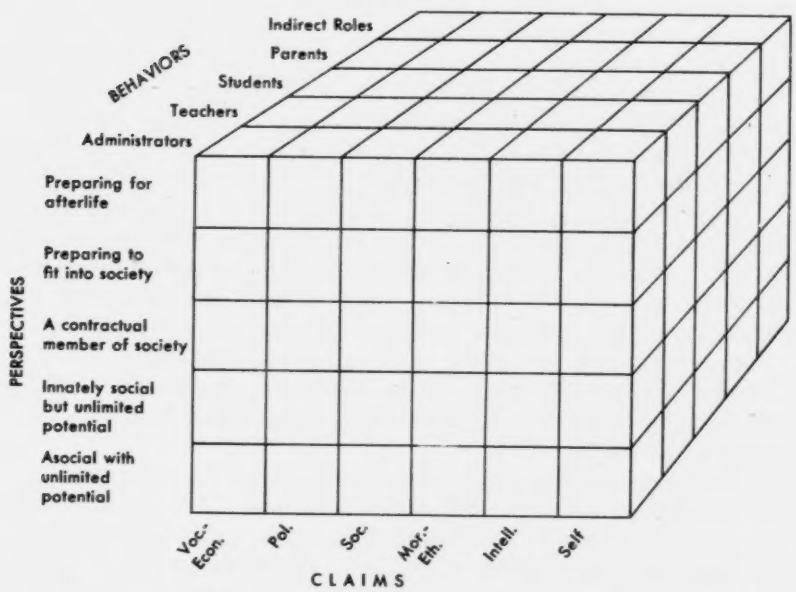

Figure 6. A Model for the Analysis of Goals and Behaviors in Education

context of intellectual development. Indeed, equal opportunity intellectually might well be the right to diversity. Clearly, the political and intellectual must be adequately related to each other in the education structure so that the kinds of equal opportunity to be found in one area would not reduce the kinds to be found in another area. In other words, intellectual diversities reflecting the effort to achieve equal educational opportunity cognitively ought not to mean a subsequent reduction in the equality of political powers.

Jencks' work undertakes to show that economic inequality exists in far greater proportions than is warranted by differences in cognition, school quality, etc. He is, in essence, dealing with a widespread American assumption that there is and ought to be a direct causal relationship between these and adult economic rewards. The unfortunate aspect of Jencks' effort is that he has not first examined the logical validity of the assumption. Thus, though he does refer to many kinds of equality, his statistical analysis treats equal opportunity as though it were of one piece. Instead,

equal opportunity changes its essential characteristics as it changes the area of human behavior that is being emphasized. In the context of education this means that each category of claims must first be considered independently—an undertaking which Jencks totally avoids. What it means ideally and in terms of teacher behaviors, student behaviors, etc., regardless of one's perspectives of man, will undergo considerable modification from claim to claim.

When equal educational opportunity has been considered in this way, it is then necessary to determine how these diverse kinds of equality can be retained in the daily operation of a school. How can diversity in intellectual development be encouraged while not negatively influencing equal economic opportunity or equal political power? What can the schools do to ensure the retention of equal political power within the schools; outside of the schools? *What can the schools not do?* What should the limits to the many public claims on education be?

Had Jencks truly approached the question of equality in its multiple forms, his first effort would have been to determine what the presence of equal opportunity would mean within the schools. He would have ascertained whether it was indeed present and in what forms. He would not have sought proof for causal relationships, for example, between cognitive differences and economic differences. Though there may be a causal connection in our society between these factors, a necessary characteristic of the achievement of equal opportunity is the recognition of diverse kinds of opportunity that ought not to be causally related. Diverse kinds of equal opportunities need to be carefully brought into the societal (or into the lesser educational) structure so that their impingement or influence on each other is limited, that is, made noncausal insofar as this is possible.

In the determination of what equal opportunity means under each of the claims, the perspectives of man and his relationship to society play a key role in determining the forms that each kind of equality may take. If it is held that man's happiness lies in learning how to fit into society, equality in political development will mean helping each student to understand his place in the political life of his nation. If it is held that man is a contractual participant of his society, equality in political development will mean encouraging each student to use the array of existing resources so that the best possible political decisions can be reached. The behaviors that each of these perspectives would entail in the actual school situation would be quite different. The former would be best implemented

if the student attentively absorbs the information given to him by his teacher; the latter would be best implemented if the student becomes involved in active research, using the teacher himself as a resource.

The question of how school people ought to behave in an actual situation, given a well-developed map of equal educational opportunity, could be faced to some extent in discussions such as this one. However, the interaction of people is so complex that the consideration of behaviors in the light of goals must be continuous. It must be contemporary with what is actually happening in the schools.

It may well be that what was thought to be possible, is not possible. The qualities of human behavior, especially as these relate to group participation, remain enigmatic and uncertain. Ongoing evaluation is a vital component in any effort to achieve equal opportunity. Such evaluation, however, must recognize the qualitative nature of human behavior and the extreme limits of quantitative analysis in relationship to human behavior. It must further recognize the diverse qualities of equal opportunity and the need to avoid causal interaction with regard to differing kinds of equality.

The tendency has been to treat equal educational opportunity as a myth instead of as a viable and desirable possibility. The time has come to take an adequate view of the realities of equality before we again become immersed in a series of fads leading to little but bitter discouragement.

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